



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**ACCESO**

## SNAPSHOT

### Improving Rural Childhood Nutrition

**Applying techniques learned from USAID-ACCESO, mothers see improvements in their children's health.**



*Photo by Fintrac Inc.*

Ada Consuelo is learning healthy, simple recipes that help improve her children's nutrition. Her young daughter was underweight, but with help from the project, Ada was able to bring her to a healthy weight.

**"Sometimes we do not have enough money to buy food, but now we make fortified tortillas with vegetables from our garden...we do not need to buy outside food anymore."**

*Alicia Gonzalez*

#### **Telling Our Story**

U.S. Agency for International Development  
Washington, DC 20523-1000  
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

As part of its nutrition and health component, USAID-ACCESO is providing training to mothers of young children in rural communities to combat malnutrition and disease.

In the communities of El Tabor and Las Hortensias, undernutrition is a serious problem among children under 2, with nearly half of the children weighing in the bottom percentile for their age groups. Through trainings and household visits, USAID-ACCESO is teaching rural families how to prepare nutritious meals using readily-available ingredients from their own farms or gardens.

The results so far are impressive: after only a few months, the number of underweight children dropped by 20 percent. The project will continue working with these families to further reduce the prevalence of malnutrition among children through the implementation of sustainable health and nutrition practices.

The mothers in El Tabor and Las Hortensias are thrilled with the results and are making changes in their daily lives to ensure their children consume enough nutrients for healthy development.

Rosibel Lopez attends monthly trainings in El Tabor and is seeing a difference in her 8-month-old daughter's health after incorporating recipes she learned from USAID-ACCESO and the volunteers into her meals.

Alicia Gonzalez, whose daughter had been suffering from a respiratory condition and had trouble gaining weight, has also seen improvements since she began participating in the USAID-ACCESO trainings.

"Sometimes we do not have enough money to buy food, but now we make fortified tortillas with vegetable leaves that we used to throw away," Gonzalez said. "We do not have to buy food from outside our community."

In Las Hortencias, Ada Consuelo's 14-month-old daughter, Gleny, suffered from a lack of appetite for three months, her weight gradually declining. USAID-ACCESO staff taught Consuelo new food preparation and hygiene practices to stimulate Gleny's appetite and help her regain the weight.

"In November I started to prepare vegetable soup, rice with greens, and fortified tortillas. But the fortified tortillas are not just for kids! We grown-ups like them too," Consuelo said.

The project is also helping renovate a school in El Tabor, turning it into the area's first nutrition training facility. In the last three months, USAID-ACCESO performed more than 2,000 health-related technical assistance visits.